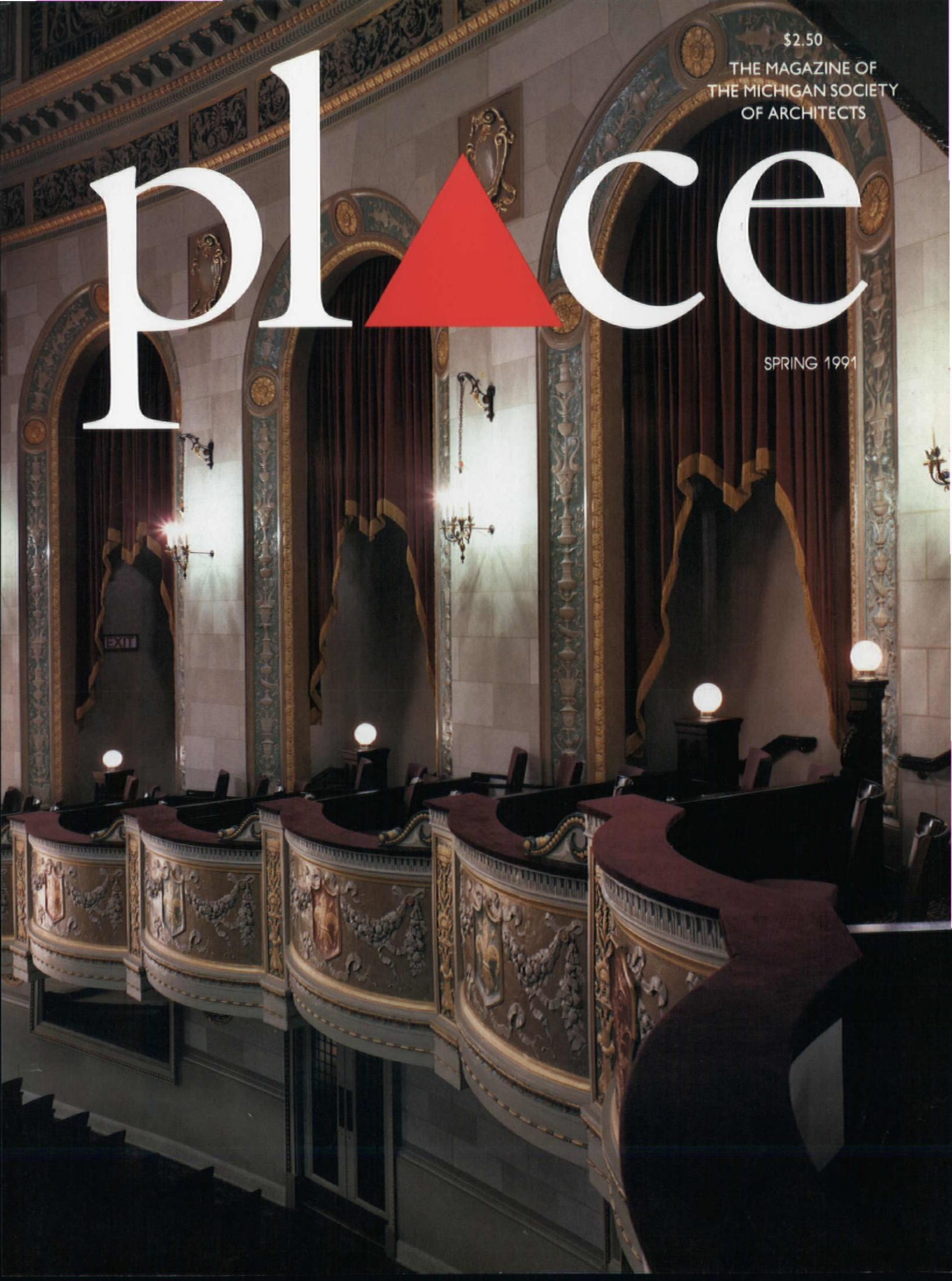


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# place

SPRING 1991





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The new box seats at Detroit's beautiful Orchestra Hall returned to their former glory and graced with reproductions of the original partitions and fabrics.

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address in care of Rae Dumke.



# Ya Gotta Have Art

**W**ith the specter of the economic slowdown (the R word) howling at the doors of Michigan architects and with the new governor financially terrorizing the Michigan arts community, it seemed like a more than opportune time to feature some of the best collaborations between these two beleaguered groups. Well, actually this topic was on our editorial calendar over a year ago, but who's counting. Nonetheless, artists and architects alike have something to be thankful for despite their relative cash flow

positions. They can both feel quite good about the exceedingly high quality of work growing out of the kind of creative partnerships represented by featured projects in this issue of *Place*.

Sense of place is a nebulous phrase at best, one which, when trying to describe it to friends, leaves us groping for adjectives to verbalize our feelings. Sense of place can best be described as, to borrow a phrase, "you know it when

you experience it." This thought in turn brings to mind the worn out cliché "you had to be there," simply because being there is what sense of place is all about. It is our contention that bringing together artists and architects results in a heightened sense of place; an experience which is more than decorated space or architectural enclosure.

As you examine the projects featured in this Art and

Architecture issue, look carefully for the sense of place which users of the facility must certainly experience. Imagine the space without art, or the art without environment. What a dramatic difference it makes! Bear in mind that each project was realized through a collaborative effort of architects and artists and that each was initiated by a client with the vision to understand the enormous benefits possible in such partnerships. We think that you will, as we did, recognize that not only is this effort worthwhile, but that it pays dividends in terms of spatial quality which are difficult to quantify, but are wonderful to experience.

So why don't more projects have works of art as an integral part of their design if the result is so wonderful? Yes, there is a lack of money and yes, there is a lack of time as well. But more importantly, there is a lack of initiative. Owners and architects must think of it as an integral part of the design process; they must apply for the grants; they must solicit the donations; they must provide a place on the schedule. Up front is where this idea belongs and each of the projects featured here have that in common. The notion that art and architecture work together to create a heightened sense of place was a part of the design process from the start.

That is why ya gotta have art.

Tim Casai, AIA



# The Perfect Couple

**T**he marriage of Art and Architecture has been a rocky one, with long periods of estrangement occasionally interrupted by short periods of bliss. So it was only natural that we were skeptical about the persistent rumors of a reunion.

Yet it has turned out to be true. Art and Architecture have been seen together in public places, and are apparently headed for another of their rare, though greatly celebrated, honeymoons.

**Q** What is Architectural Art?

**A** Basically, Art that involves the Architect. This could be a design created by the building's designer and executed by an artist, or something entirely of the artist's own design and deemed appropriate for the project by the designer.

The designers of a building should always be included in the selection of art; even the owner's favorite painting must be objectively

evaluated and put in an appropriate place. Otherwise, we run the risk of seeing dogs playing pool on the wall of the president's office, while the designer notes that it would look just fine in the warehouse.

**Q** How does one find an architectural artist?

**A** Many architects know artists who work with wood, ceramic, glass, stone, etc and can coordinate directly with the artist. Also, the Michigan Society of Architects



has a list of architectural artists and will share this information. The state of Michigan Commission on Art in Public Places coordinates and facilitates competitions to select artists for important public works of art. These pieces are often financed by setting aside a percentage of the building construction budget specifically for works of art.

**Q** Is having custom art commissioned for a project expensive?

**A** It doesn't have to be. Small works can be commissioned for just a few hundred dollars and are still major points of interest. Budgets go up as size, detail and client involvement increase. Funding comes from a variety of sources, including



project budget put asides, grants from foundations and also donations from private sources who are patrons of quality art and architecture.

**Q** What can be done to assure delivery of custom art on schedule?

**A** Have a contract, complete with deadlines and the consequences of missing deadlines clearly outlined, in language that even the artist understands. Experienced artists recognize the importance of construction deadlines and will build extra time into the scheduling of a project to deal with visits from Mr. Murphy. Most important of all, plan ahead. Your

architect will provide the overall coordination necessary to ensure a happy marriage between Art and Architecture.

*Fred Blackwood*

*Mr. Blackwood is a ceramic artist whose work often honeymoons with good architecture. A current example of his work is pictured here.*

*Photography: Jay Schoeppe*

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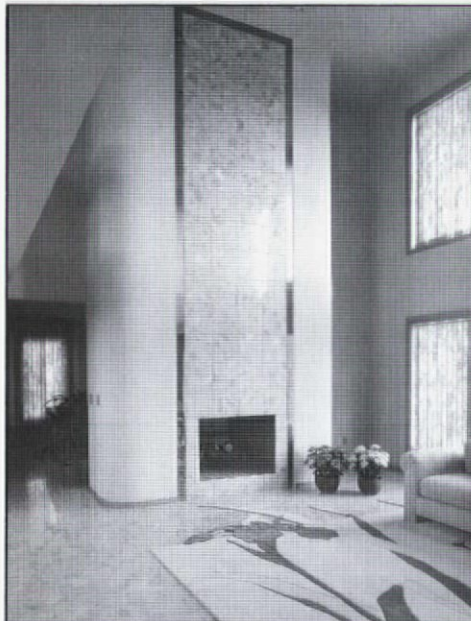
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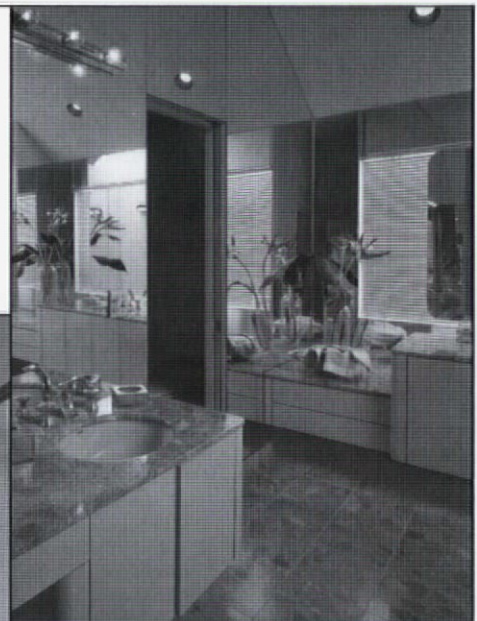
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# Back To Basics

**S**ometimes it's hard to take the Jargon of architecture too seriously. We thought it might be fun to get back to the basics of this column: What do we mean by what we say? Having listened to many architects try to communicate their ideas to clients, it's clear that what is said, what is intended and what is heard are often not quite the same. So, on the lighter side, and in the interest of public service, we're going to undertake to fix that here. We've taken a few quotes overheard and provided translations below. To wit:

*When your architect says*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
he/she really means  
\_\_\_\_\_.

*We will have a charette to  
produce conceptual vignettes.*  
Let's get everyone together,  
make a big mess and come up  
with some sketch ideas.

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*The parti finds its antecedents  
in classical orders.*

I found a good plan by a dead  
Italian and I'm copying it.

*The circulation pattern  
reconciles conflicting axes.*

The hallways cross in the  
middle.

*We have provided a transition  
surge space for pre-event  
functions.*

There's a vestibule and a  
lobby.

*The solid-void relationship  
finds its roots in the building  
context.*

The windows look a lot like  
the ones on the building next  
door.

*The fenestration pattern forms  
a harmonious whole.*

The windows are symmetrical.

*The color scheme relates the  
interior environment to the  
surrounding site.*

We like green.

*We're planning to investigate  
that as soon as we have all  
relevant information.*

We definitely need more time.

*Don't be overly concerned  
with these sketches as literal  
solutions. They will be  
developed further in the next  
phase.*

I want to think about what this  
thing looks like a little longer.

We hope this helps.  
Architecture is an art for  
everyone; words that obscure  
rather than illuminate do not  
serve architects or clients well.  
But, in truth, it's sometimes  
necessary to paint word  
pictures in order to convey a  
vision of what is to become.

In the meantime, we'll all be  
better armed by the  
translations of jargon above.  
Who knows? Maybe your next  
meeting will be ripe with  
allegorical allusions! That  
would be okay... or would it?

Brian A. Craig, AIA  
James E. Vander Molen, AIA



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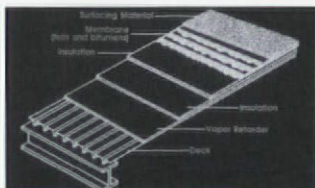
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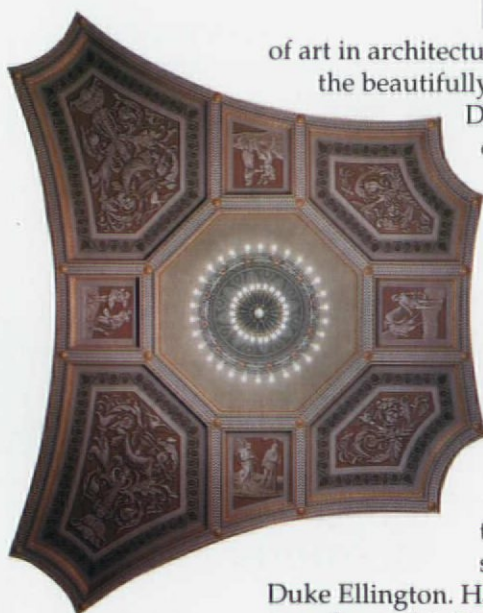
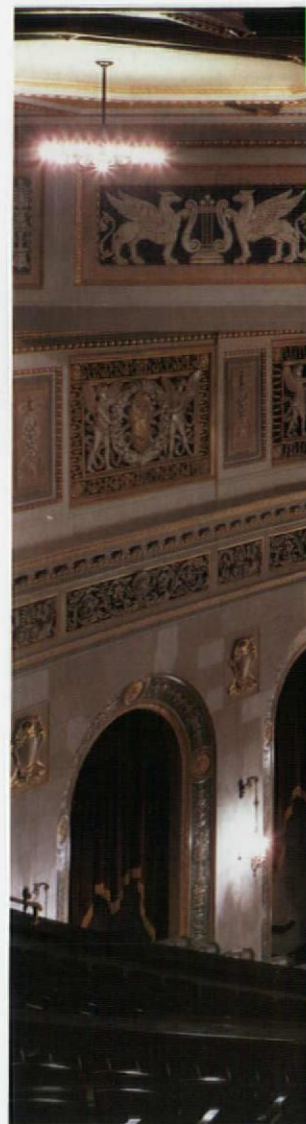
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# PARADISE REGAINED



The ceiling features paintings re-created by the Evergreen Paint Studios.

Rarely has the concept of art in architecture come as fully to life as in the beautifully restored Orchestra Hall in Detroit. The hall embraces the concept of art in architecture both literally and figuratively: Literally because within its walls are contained numerous examples of sculpture, painting and textiles that bring the environment to life; Figuratively because these elegant walls have, for over seventy years, made a home for the somber tones of Mahler and the sophisticated rhythms of Duke Ellington. Happily, the building is ready to embrace this kind of cultural wealth all over again.

Orchestra Hall opened in 1919, constructed hastily to fulfill the vision, and the demands, of

Maestro Ossip Gabrilowitsch, Director of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. Its architect, C. Howard Crane, was renowned for his skillful theater designs, which in Detroit alone include the Fox and State theaters; yet the acoustics of the hall, virtually perfect, are still considered a happy accident.

When the symphony moved to the larger Masonic Temple in 1939, Orchestra Hall quickly found new life as the Paradise Theater, which featured performances by the jazz greats of the day. The only real use the Symphony found for the building during this period was as a recording studio and in the 1960s, the building was abandoned.

Acoustical perfection, or a cheeseburger? An odd choice, perhaps, but nonetheless it is the one that confronted the citizens of Detroit in 1970 when it was announced Orchestra Hall would be demolished to clear land for a fast-food restaurant. Paul Ganson, a bassoonist for the symphony, felt this was a choice he could not live with, so he spearheaded the volunteer





movement that evolved into Save Orchestra Hall, Inc.; which had the building listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1971; encouraged its use as a performing arts center; and galvanized the community with its fundraising and herculean restoration efforts.

This characteristic of citizen commitment alone makes the restoration of Orchestra Hall something special. It reminds us that for the most part, preservation in this country has been a grass-roots movement. People are proud of the restoration of Orchestra Hall because they know it represents the blood, sweat and tears of individuals.

By the time the restoration was underway in the 1970s, fire, water and vandalism had done their share of damage. As the process of restoring the hall to its original glory began, it was paramount that the acoustical characteristics of the building be respected and maintained. This is more than merely a

continues

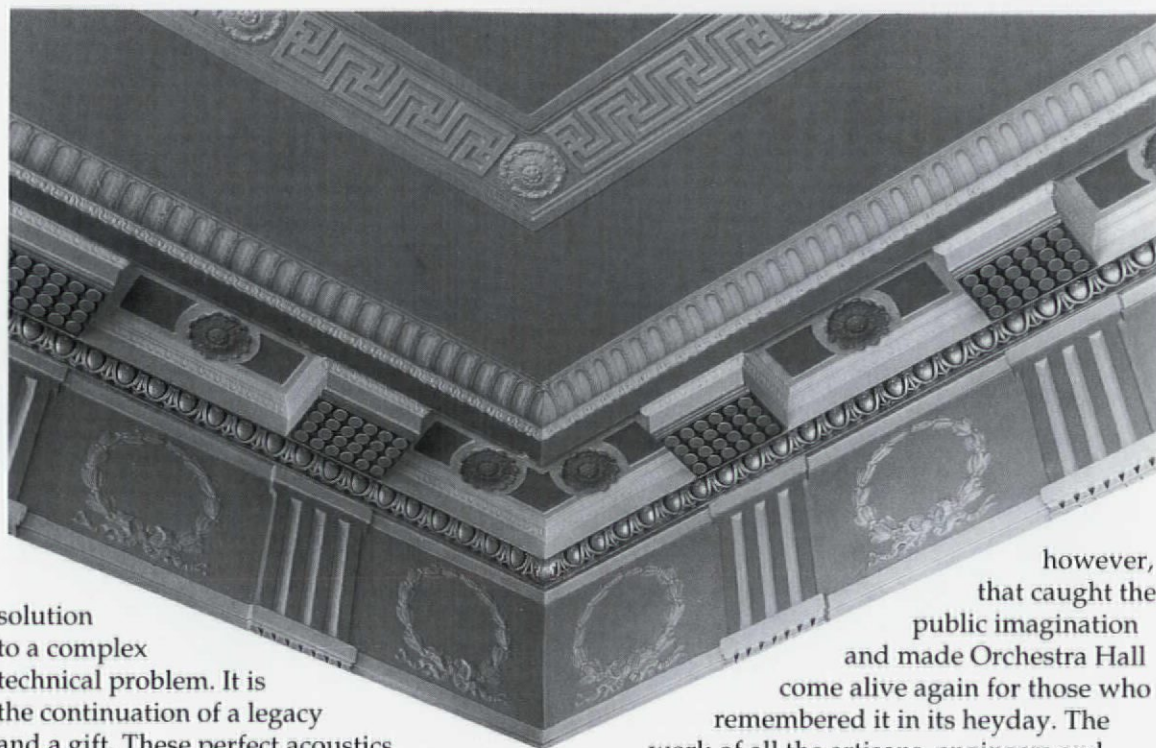


The perfection of the acoustics remains something of a mystery, but is prized by all musicians and music lovers who have visited the hall.

During Phase I of the restoration, many of the finishes of the hall were removed, to be reinstalled later after structural stability was ensured.



The intricate restoration of these elegant walls has made Orchestra Hall come alive again.



solution to a complex technical problem. It is the continuation of a legacy and a gift. These perfect acoustics would be impossible to reproduce from scratch; any decision that was made in the hall had to be analyzed in terms of whether it would have any effect on this prized quality, and whenever possible, original materials would have to be used or replicated exactly.

Considering the complexity and sensitivity of the project, it was critical that the restoration team be skilled and respectful. Fortunately, the team was in the hands of MSA member Richard Frank, FAIA, a prominent preservation architect. Frank

*It was essential that the acoustics of the Hall be maintained.*

combined forces with Diehl & Diehl Architects, Inc., a Detroit architectural firm, who documented the building and oversaw any architectural changes made to it; and a group of talented engineers and consultants. Together, these skilled professionals brought about a miraculous transformation.

Early phases of the restoration, completed in 1988 at a cost of \$5.3 million, revolved chiefly around securing the stability of the building and carefully documenting the details of the design and construction. Many of the interior finishes of the auditorium had to be disassembled to strengthen what lay behind and all had to be put back together precisely to ensure that the acoustics would not be affected. The changes were many and remarkable in terms of their architectural character and the sense of integrity they brought to the building.

It was the final phase of the restoration,

however, that caught the public imagination and made Orchestra Hall come alive again for those who remembered it in its heyday. The

work of all the artisans, engineers and architects became apparent in dramatic fashion when the wide-ranging but muted colors were applied to the newly restored plaster; when the 23-karat gold leaf was applied to the proscenium arch; and when it was all being lit from precise re-creations of the original floral light fixtures.

Much of this was brought about with the assistance of paint restoration consultant Darla Olson, who brought to the task her experience not only as a fine artist, but as a paint consultant on a variety of prestigious restoration projects. She performed exhaustive analysis on the painted surfaces of the building to determine the original colors, and worked with photographs to determine the overall decorative schemes of the building. Together, Ms. Olson and the skilled craftsmen of the Evergreen Painting Studios have created an interior of delicate tones and warm hues.

Perhaps the most charming characteristic of the restoration can be found in six painted medallions in the ceiling of the hall. When it was discovered that the designs of several small relief sculptures in the ceiling were not documented, a solution was arrived at that beautifully illustrates the character of community pride and respect for tradition that is incarnated in Orchestra Hall. The missing designs were replaced with new portraits, painted from photographs, of six of the hall's "angels," people who had devoted a part of themselves to seeing that the hall was constructed in the first place. The portraits are a fitting tribute, not only to their subjects, but



to the integrity of those who remember them.

Indeed, tributes should be paid to all those practitioners of the building arts who transformed this building from a forgotten relic to a thriving part of the life of the modern city. From the mechanical engineers who created an inaudible heating and cooling system, to the tradesmen who reconditioned and reupholstered the 2,038 seats, the tasks were handled with skill. For all the individuals involved, from the concerned citizens who conceived of a plan for restoration, to the architects who coordinated its implementation, the mission was always in focus.

The restoration of Orchestra Hall represents a unity of the arts—architecture, engineering, painting, sculpture, music—but perhaps most of all it represents a triumph of the social arts of communion and respect: Communication between individuals of different backgrounds, and disciplines often characterized as radically different in their approaches and goals; respect for the role each of us plays in remembering the past, shaping the present and giving to the future. These are the result of the restoration of Orchestra Hall; and perhaps this has always been, and certainly should be, the Art in Architecture.▼

*Dane A. Johnson, AIA*



Project: Orchestra Hall  
Associated Architects: Richard C. Frank, FAIA, and Diehl & Diehl Architects, Inc.  
Owner: Save Orchestra Hall, Inc.  
Mechanical/Electrical: SWS Engineering, Inc.  
Structural: Robert Darvas Associates, PC  
Paint Restoration Consultant: Ms. Darla Olson  
Historical Interiors Consultant: Mr. William Scale  
Acoustical Consultant: Jaffe Acoustics, Inc.  
Construction Manager: D.J. Maltese Co., Inc.  
Historic and restoration photographs provided courtesy of Detroit Symphony Orchestra Hall

**The restored lobby with its rich wood paneling, marble floor and dentil mouldings.**



Paula Bowers' weaving graces the view down through one of Steelcase's four diagonal atria to the Town Square below.

# THE PLACE OF ART IN ARCHITECTURE



A wonderful selection of Currier and Ives prints are used to visually complete the executive reception area.



In the past, architecture was legitimately thought of as the "Mother of Arts." From the earliest monumental buildings through the Classic Period, the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, architecture encompassed painting and sculpture. There was little separation between the arts and even architects such as Bernini was a sculptor as well. In

today's world, planning has become that subject or profession at the core of society's needs, superceding architecture and relegating it to the class of a luxury. However, architects have always wanted their buildings to be noteworthy expressions and among contemporary architects there exists certain design tendencies. Inventive pure structures such as R.Buckminster Fuller's domes and Myron Goldsmith's solar telescope have enormous aesthetic value. Likewise, architect Eliel Saarinen's Cranbrook presents the buildings in a space with Carl Milles sculptures as a part of that space.

Art historians have described a particular place with certain culturally derived words about the meaning of that place. In the past, "Sculpture has meant figurative and vertical work with the pedestal an important part of the sculpture as it separates the sculpture from the building or landscape. Architecture has meant 'buildings' housing the activities of man and larger than a monument of sculpture in size." Today the architect and the non-architect



use their skill to express form, line structure and space.

Landscaping and artwork in a building are a vital part of the concept of providing the best physical environment possible to contribute to mental attitudes and to provide contrasting color and form. Art may provide the humanizing touch to a functional building and speak, in the corporation of a commitment, to the working environment and community at large.

Commenting on the expansion of corporate art collecting in this decade, Judith A. Jedlicks, president of the Business Committee for the Arts, states that much of the growth had to do with new buildings going up around the country and the increasing desire of top management to foster positions of quality and pride in the working environments of those new buildings. Smaller companies too, are beginning collections as they become aware that art is not merely decor. Art is broken out as a separate budget item or a percent of the building interiors. The following are three excellent examples of corporations that have not only built magnificent structures but have enhanced those structures with art. They have all, truly discovered the place of art in architecture!

### **The Royal Maccabees Insurance Company**

The Royal Maccabees Insurance Company is committed to education and the arts and supports those activities that clearly serve the community and encourage cultural excellence. When the Company occupied their new headquarters in 1986 they surrounded their employees with a museum quality art collection.

Among the 186 pieces gathered, signature works include a Rembrandt Peal portrait of

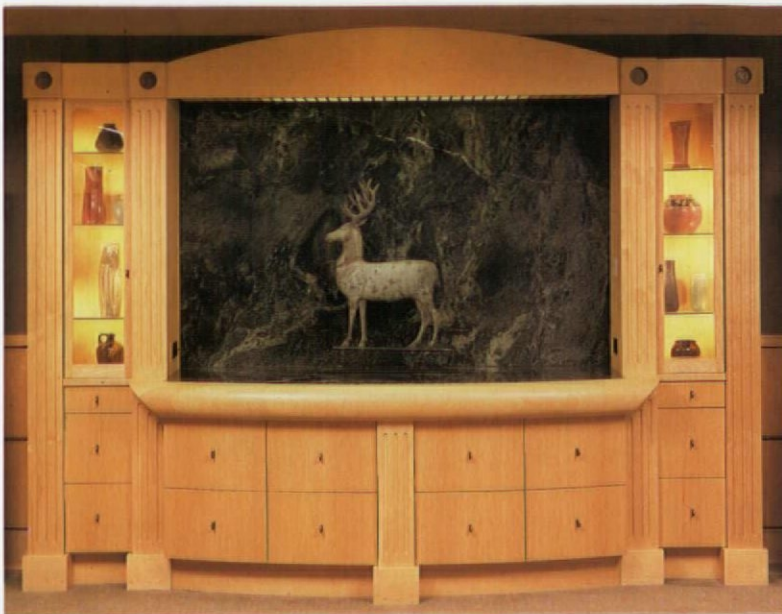
George Washington and an Andy Warhol screenprint. The collection represents the fine arts, folk and popular art traditions and includes painting, sculpture, drawing, prints, photography and the decorative arts. The chronology is balanced beginning with prints by Mark Catsby and the 1988 commission of a clock by Wendell Castle. Placement juxtaposes a Frederick Remington cowboy sculpture with

**continues**



**Wendell Castle's "Maccabees Clock" is an interesting counterpoint to the rich wood detailing of the lobby space**





Gracefully centered in this custom designed buffet, this antique weathervane is framed by pieces of Rockwood pottery.

Edward Curtis' photographic portraits of American Indians. Four traditional themes in American Art guide a careful placement of works of art to complement the architectural interiors. Each floor carries one of four themes: the portrait, the city, the rural countryside and unspoiled nature.

The process by which Maccabees collected works of art involved initial surveys, research

and recommendations by the art advisors, Mary M. Denison and Professor Richard H. Axsom. These advisors used local and national galleries, international auction houses and artists' studios as sources. Final approval of proposed purchases or commissions was made by Maccabees following formal presentations. The Maccabees Collection of American Art is an historical overview of our changing culture that is intended to motivate, teach and stimulate the eye and mind.

Robert Benson wrote in the May/June 1988 issue of *Inland Architect*: "the collaboration between architects, art consultants and patrons in this project has produced a corporate identity based on a strong commitment to artistic values. The result is an enviable interaction between art installation and architectural environment."

Project: The Royal Maccabees Insurance Company  
Southfield, Michigan

Architect & Engineer: Smith, Hinchman, Grylls  
Associates, Inc.  
Detroit, Michigan

Contractor :Turner Construction

Artist: Wendell Castle

Photographer: Dirk Bakker

## The Steelcase Corporate Development Center

Robert Pew, chairman of Steelcase, Inc., discussed his company's art collection in the 1984 catalogue introduction: "Corporations have recognized the value of fine art and a concern for aesthetics in the work place. The hundreds of art works at Steelcase headquarters were purchased to humanize the corporate setting and provide an interface of functional architecture with the decorative elements."

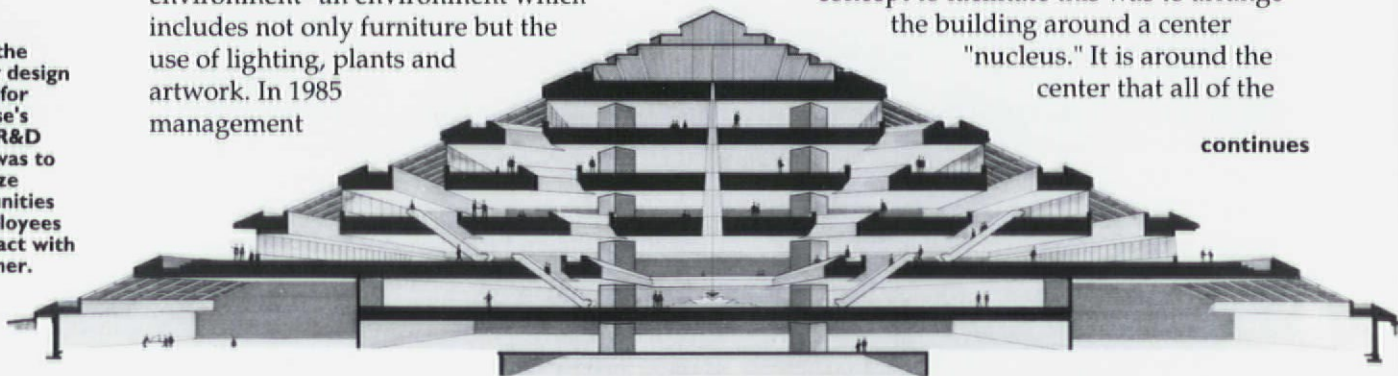
As a manufacturer of office furniture, Steelcase's focus has been the office environment--an environment which includes not only furniture but the use of lighting, plants and artwork. In 1985 management

developed plans for the Steelcase Corporate Development Center facility working with architects WBDC Group, Grand Rapids; art consultant Robert Forest, Wisconsin; and artist Dennis Jones, Tucson, Arizona.

The theme for the Steelcase research and development center is "A Celebration of Innovation." One of the primary design criteria was to maximize the opportunities for the 800 plus people that make up Steelcase's product development process to interact and communicate with each other. The architect's concept to facilitate this was to arrange the building around a center "nucleus." It is around the center that all of the

continues

One of the primary design criteria for Steelcase's unique R&D center was to maximize opportunities for employees to interact with each other.



Sectional Perspective





The Town Square features pieces from the Steelcase art collection in addition to the kinetic sculpture.





Suspended from a "gimbal" located at the fifth floor, the sculpture swings within the glass shaft above a water feature in the center of the Town Square.

*The design challenge was to provide an environment for creative thinking.*

### The Fetzer Foundation

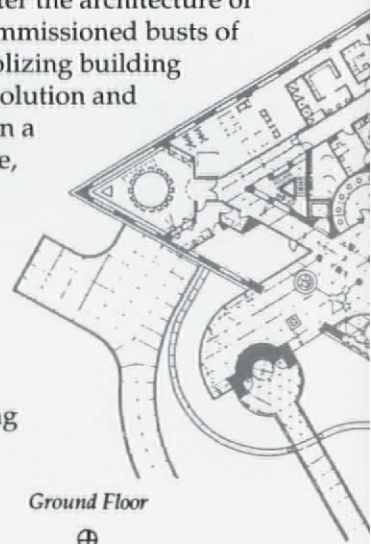
The late John E. Fetzer provided assets to develop and fund an international research effort dedicated to the broad exploration of holistic principles. The Foundation Headquarters in Kalamazoo was developed as a place to study the linkage of mind, body and spirit, which the Foundation believes are critical to improve personal and global well being. The design challenge for this project was to provide the optimum environment for creative thinking. The solution, created by architects Harley, Ellington, Pierce & Yee Associates in 1988, resulted in a two story triangular shaped building utilizing classic materials, pure forms and historical references to convey a dignity of purpose and permanence. The triangle of the building and logo symbolize the balance

mutually shared functions are located. A kinetic expression is located in this center that extends from the second floor up through the glass shaft to the sixth floor, becoming the focal point of each floor. The kinetic sculpture, which attempts to capture the essence of both the visual and the technical aspects of the creative process, serves as a daily reminder to the employees of the mission of the CDC. Dennis Jones, the sculptor, has named the piece "Synergy."

The variable motion of the sculpture "appears to vacuum up the nectar of creativity and distribute it via its 71 foot high shaft"...wrote Michael J.P. Smith in the November/December issue of *Inland Architecture*. Variable motion cycles which are tied into solar and lunar activity are controlled by a computer program. The sculpture is programmed so that each day it has a unique pattern of motion. The entire sculpture is constructed of stainless steel. This is also significant because of the important role that steel as a material has played in the history of Steelcase, Inc.

Project: Steelcase Corporate Development Center (CDC)  
Gaines Township, Michigan  
Architect: The WBDC Group  
Grand Rapids, Michigan  
Artist: Dennis Jones, Tucson Arizona  
Paula Bowers, Ada, Michigan  
Contractor: Barnes Construction  
Grand Rapids, Michigan  
Photography: Balthazar Korab Ltd.

between mind, body and spirit. The art within the building centers on spaces to hear and see a sixty foot waterfall running slowly over a curved black granite wall. A semicircular hall of records, patterned after the architecture of Monticello, contains commissioned busts of historical figures symbolizing building blocks in humanity's evolution and progress. Located within a remote wooded lake site, the facility incorporates the latest technologies such as temperature and humidity controls, special acoustics, color-balanced lighting, purified air and drinking water and a fully shielded electrical







A semi-circle of busts stand at attention under the gilded ceiling.

The skylit atrium provides natural light to the inner spaces and views for visitors and staff.

system. Interior spaces include a meditation room, natural light and each office provides view to the wooded site.

Art in architecture, whether contrasted or collaborative, cannot be evaluated until we actually experience the space of the place and feel the spirit of that place. The collaboration of artist, architect and client in these projects continue the tradition in Michigan of Art and Architecture. ▼



Mary M. Denison

Art advisor; collector; honorary member Detroit Chapter AIA; Director Detroit Focus Gallery; and currently serving on boards at Detroit Institute of Arts and the Cranbrook Academy of Art.

Project: Fetzer Foundation  
Kalamazoo, Michigan

Owner: The John E. Fetzer Foundation

Architects and Engineers: Harley Ellington Pierce Yee  
Associates Inc. (HEPY)  
Southfield, Michigan

Contractor: DeYoung & Bagin Construction Company

Photography: Balthazar Korab Ltd.



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# SUITABLE FOR FRAMING

In its inaugural brochure, the commission on Art in Public Places wrote, "Art in public places, like architecture, can be a visible record of our total culture. It is a means by which we see ourselves and are seen by others as well." How well the art and the architecture work together greatly influences the clarity of that visible record.

Though it may seem to many people that it is architecture which can most easily be defined as "art in public places," the phrase has come instead to describe a unity of purpose in the placement of original works of art in buildings, parks, etc. which are constructed using public funds.

The commission was created to promote and administer this program which calls for up to one percent of the total construction budget to be set aside for art. The idea has spawned

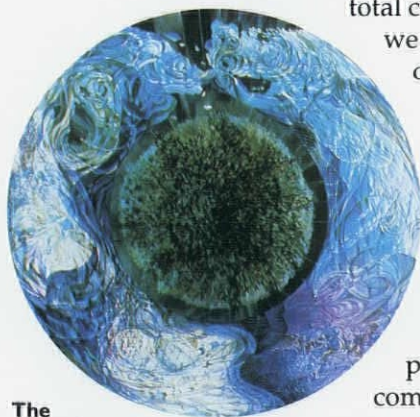
similar programs on the local level in cities such as East Lansing and has nurtured the creation of major works in a variety of locations throughout the state.

But what is often most interesting—and challenging—about the program is the creative energy generated by the collaborative effort between the artist and architect. Issues of spatial development, texture, color and lighting are ripe for debate. There have been notable failures in these energized working relationships, but the majority have yielded important pieces of art which have enhanced the architecture and raised the public awareness of both. In these cases, the whole is truly greater than the sum of its parts, and the visible record reflects a positive self image.

## **The Michigan Library, Museum, and Archives**

As a repository for those things that link the people of Michigan to our rich and diverse past, this facility is much more than a mere

*continues*



The fountain pool mural is a dynamic functioning piece of art which promises to be the perfect complement to the Michigan white pine which graces the courtyard



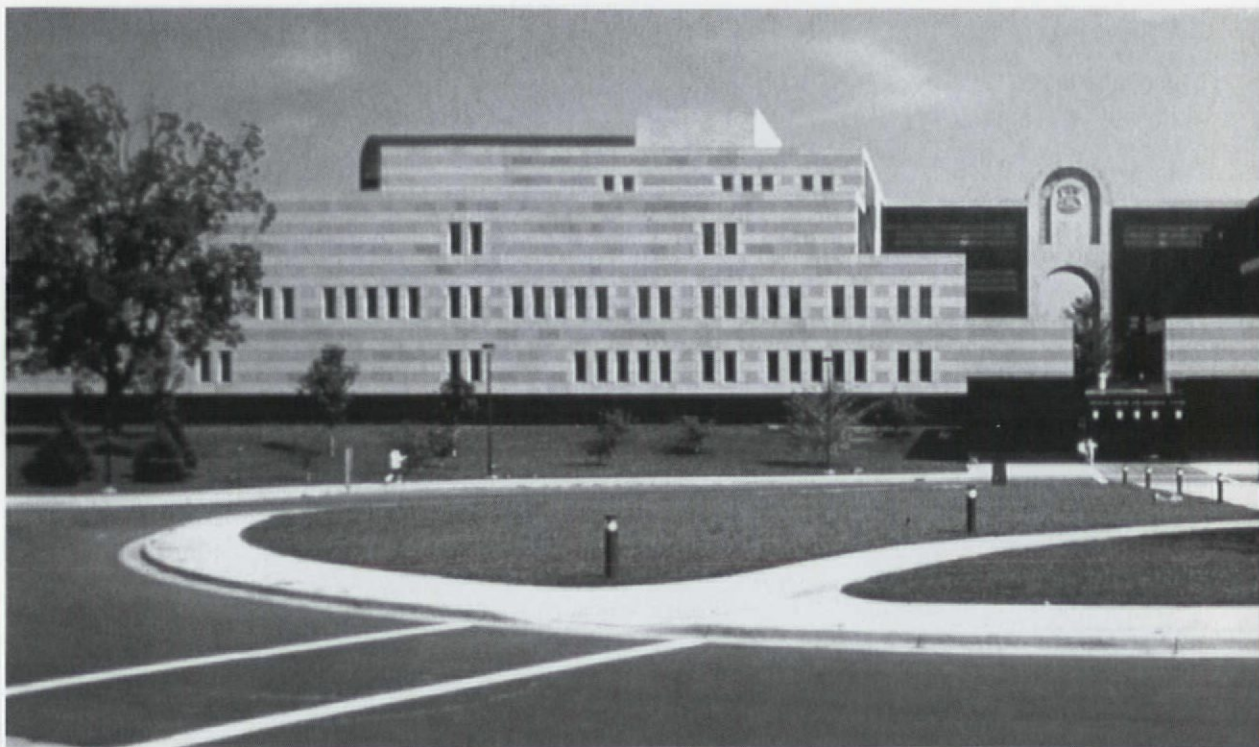


The restful beauty of Richard Koslow's painted forest window enhances the stairway in the natural light flooded atrium space.



David Barr's "Polaris Ring" announces the facility with strength and a bit of mystery.

A grant from the Hudson Foundation made possible the dramatic tapestries by Gerhardt Knodel in the board room.



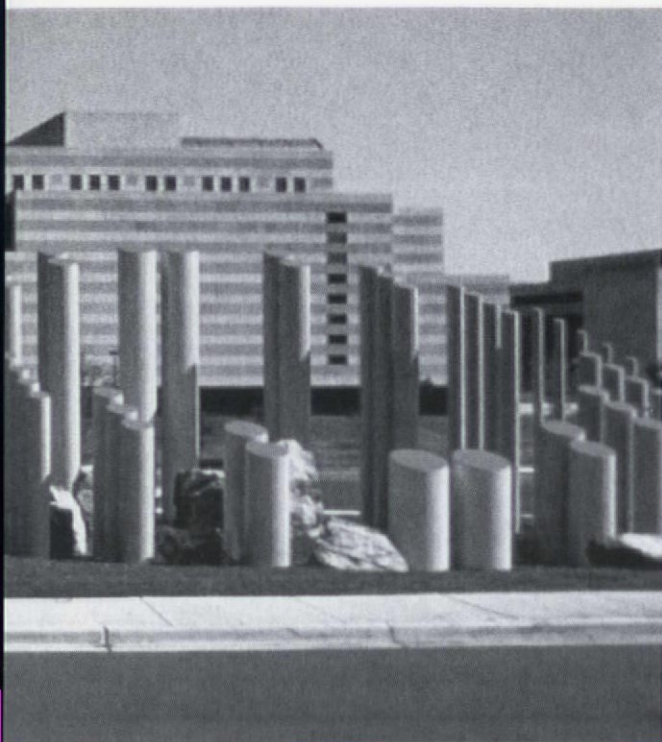
library or museum. It represents a spirit and a soul for this great state; a beginning—and a hint of the future. It allows us to immerse ourselves in a history full of ideas, events and people.

As a piece of civic architecture, this facility also represents more than a simple expression of function or need. This project lives on many successful emotional planes which overlap to create a feeling of permanence, a sense of pride and a harmony of expression. The classical forms and proportions give it both substance and a certain solidity. Attention to detail, use of quality and in many cases native materials make this large (312,000 square foot) facility not only visually pleasing but also technically impressive. Visitors can't help but feel proud of what we have accomplished in Michigan and also, how those accomplishments are showcased in this facility.

But one of the largest measures of success is the harmony created by the marriage of art and architecture. No stranger to collaborative efforts with artists on his projects, Bill Kessler has blended creative efforts seamlessly. The major art works integrate into this building so that one cannot imagine the spaces without them.

Four artists were selected from 400 submissions to the commission on Art in Public Places and two other artists were commissioned through private grants. The six worked closely with Kessler to understand the spatial qualities that were possible through





Project: The Michigan Library, Museum and Archives Building,  
Lansing, Michigan

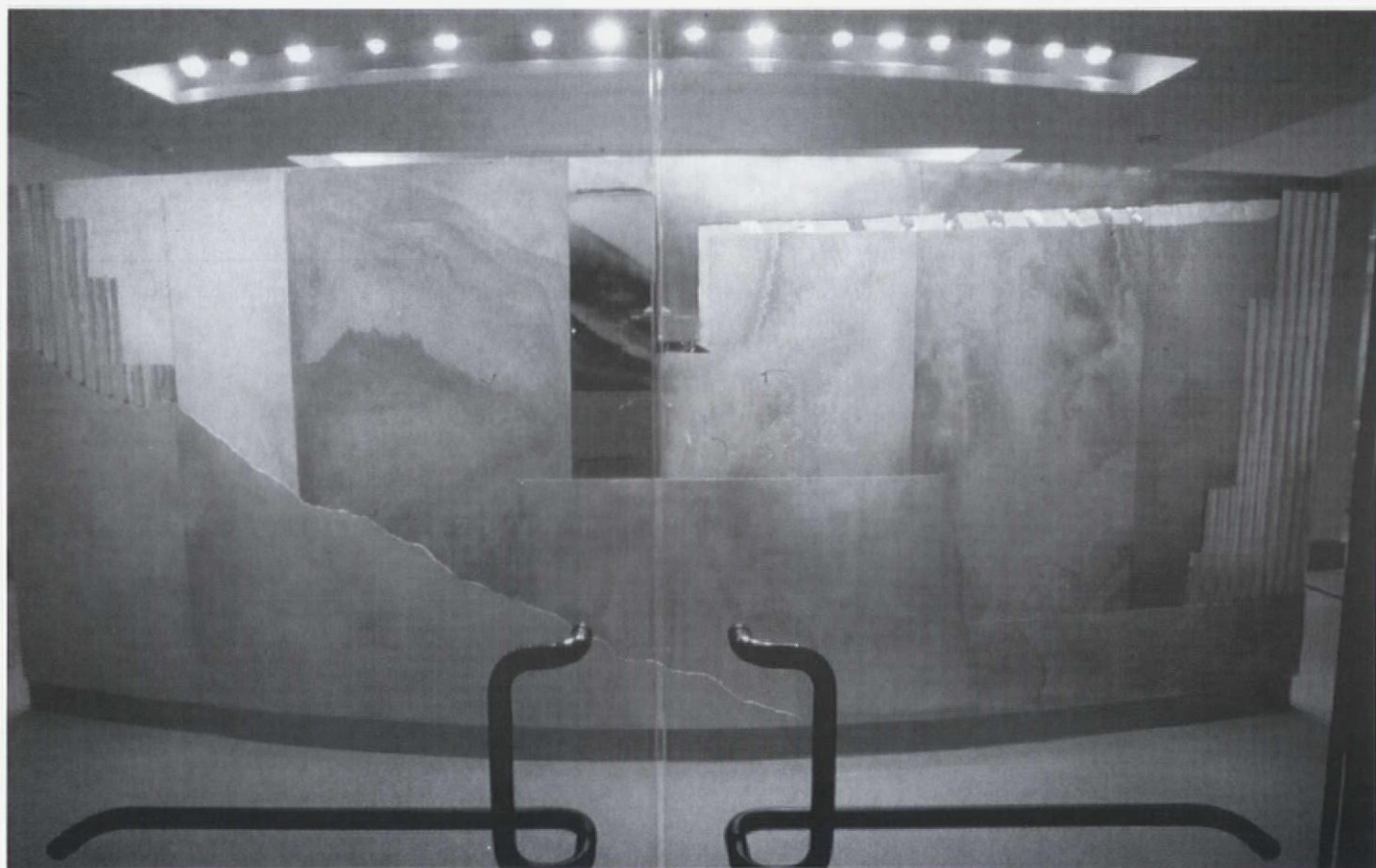
Architect: William Kessler and Associates,  
Detroit, Michigan

General Contractor: M.A. Mortenson

Artists: David Barr, Sergio DiGuisti  
Al Hinton Gerhard Knodel,  
Richard Koslow, Glen Michaels

Photography: Balthazar Korab Ltd.

**Sergio DiGuisti's relief panels live in a quiet seating area where they can be appreciated as a total composition.**



creative partnership. Each piece dramatically effects the spatial "moods" of the facility. From serenity to excitement, these "moods" in turn serve to enhance the experience of the architecture.

With over five million volumes on its miles of shelves, and countless historical documents and displays, there is certainly no shortage of things to do here. All visitors should, however, spend some time appreciating how uplifting art in public places can be!

**continues**

**The two sided metallic mural located in the Archives reading room is "a marriage between rural and urban Michigan" says artist Al Hinton.**



The \$16.2 million structure conveys a high-tech imagery which is elegant and jewel-like.



### Industrial and Engineering Technology Building

This piece by artist David Black, a white pavilion-like sculpture of monumental proportions, was installed in the plaza area near the entrance of the building.

On the campus of Central Michigan University, this structure not only cultivates the notion of art and architecture collaborating towards an enhanced design solution, but also adds a dynamic third element to the complex. Technology is an equal partner here; the three

working together like the proverbial three-legged stool. Students are reminded each time they attend class that art in public places can work well even when the public place is a "high-tech" laboratory facility.

A public concourse, characterized by the volumes and forms of an industrial space, serves as the focal point for the structure. It functions both as the primary circulation space and as a display gallery for student works. The facility itself is

also intended as an exhibit of architectural technology.

The mechanical and electrical systems and the structural elements, where advantageous, are exposed and identified. Additionally, many of the labs have windows from the concourse for viewing. Indeed, the overall form of the building invokes an historical industrial image without sacrificing functionality of its "high-tech" image.

Selected by a jury of arts professionals, the two artists who ultimately participated with the design team had very large impact on the character of the interior and exterior circulation spaces. In the concourse space, artist John Egner "painted" the floor with ceramic tiles, which are in the words of the artist, "...not background music, but art that does not get in the way." His judgment in not proposing a wall painting, which would have been lost in this massive linear space, is welcome.

Outdoors, hovering over the entrance plaza sits an environmental sculpture by artist David Black. He worked closely with the architects to coordinate lighting, tree placement and circulation to achieve what he terms, "a pavilion sculpture." "A place where people can participate by sitting, meeting and conversing," says the artist. There is a strong kinship between the industrial aesthetic of the







The concourse provides a social gathering place for students.

One of the commissioned works by artist John Egner takes the form of a patterned tile corridor installed in the 600 foot long, 30 foot wide concourse.

architecture and the raw energy of the sculpture. They work well together.

Clearly, both the architects and the artists understood the technological spirit captured in this project. Working with elements of texture, color and form, the design team has brought art, architecture and "high-tech" into close harmony. That spirit and harmony can only be described as "all for one and one for all." ▼

*Tim Casai, AIA*

Project: Industrial and Engineering  
Technology Building  
Central Michigan University  
Mt. Pleasant, Michigan

Architects & Engineers: Greiner, Inc.,  
Grand Rapids,  
Michigan

Construction Manager: The Christman  
Company

Artists: John Egner  
David Black

Tile Mason: Standard Tile

Photographers: Robert Barclay  
Nedra Frodge



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ceramic artist  
(313) 449-8330  
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## LAST STAR OVER LANSING

Polaris Ring by David Barr

At Michigan Library and Historical Center  
William Kessler, Architect

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